

On 1.vi.1996 an exceptionally pale-looking *E. tages* was noticed flying on a cleared slope within Combe Wood, Berkshire (51° 20' N, 1° 29' W) and netted for closer examination. Though the entire underside and hindwing uppersides were typical in colour, the forewing uppersides were predominantly pale ochreous cream, with the areas corresponding to the usual ground colour being very pale brown and obscure on the left side and virtually indiscernible on the right. The individual showed no visible wear and tear and the presence of forewing costal folds established it to be male.

The aberration does not correspond to any named form (Russwurm, 1978; Emmet & Heath, 1990) and was retained as a voucher. However a specimen listed by Worldwide Butterflies (1995. *British Butterfly Aberrations*) and described as "basically off white with some darker markings", though not figured and now in private possession (Robert C. Goodden, *pers. comm.*), may represent a related phenomenon affecting the entire upperside and possibly the underside. Since even aberrations of limited visual appeal can provide insights into pattern development and evolution (Nijhout, 1991. *The Development and Evolution of Butterfly Wing Patterns*. Smithsonian Institution Press; Winokur, 1996. *Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist.* 9: 193-195), the documentation of full descriptions is encouraged in order that comparative information should not be lost.— L. WINOKUR, 8 Parklands Close, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO52 2EQ.

### Some interesting records of moths in the Isle of Wight in the winter of 1998-99

December was a very mild and wet month with a couple of dry and cold spells. On 13 December Brian Warne took *Orthosia cerasi* (Fabr.) at light at Binstead and on 30 December he recorded *Apocheima pilosaria* (D.&S.) at the same locality. Both these species normally emerge in the spring and so are exceptionally early by about three months.

On 20 December a beautiful dark example of *Chrysodeixis chalcites* (Esp.) emerged from its pupa spun up in nettle *Urtica dioica*. I found the half grown larva on Spanish celery which I bought at the local Somerfields supermarket at Freshwater on 19 November. It fed up quickly, first on celery then on nettle and pupated on 7 December, in which stage it remained for only 13 days. On 22 November I found a fully grown larva of *Heliothis armigera* (Hb.) in a Spanish pepper also at the same supermarket. This soon pupated and emerged on New Year's Day.

I should also mention some late migrants. On 9 December I recorded *Peridroma saucia* (Hb.) and the pyralid *Udea ferrugalis* (Hb.). On 14 December I recorded a perfect specimen of *Mythimna unipuncta* (Haw.) which could have been a locally bred example and on 21 December I found a well-marked *Peridroma saucia* which had been attracted to an outside electric light at the Freshwater Conservative Club.— S.A. KNILL-JONES, Roundstone, 2 School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight.